

is sent to the portable terminal 32 of the salesman in charge of the user and in Step S8, price confirmation, order cancellation, or other information is returned to the main server 81 via the portable terminal 32 by the salesman.

5 Upon receiving the price confirmation, the main server 81 sends (transmits) ordering information to the terminal 13 of the manufacturer 1 immediately in Step S9 by attaching an order approval request. The order approval request is processed immediately by software running on the terminal
10 13 of the manufacturer 1 or by the operator who manages the terminal 13. In Step S10, normally an order approval is returned (transmitted) by the terminal 13 to the main server 81. If information indicating cancellation of the order is received because of a mistake in price, the status of
15 the corresponding order receipt information is changed, for example, to "Cancelled."

Next, in Step S11, if the main server 81 receives an order approval, it generates e-mail indicating the order approval, and sends it to the terminal 41 of the user 4 and
20 terminal 31 of the seller 3. This e-mail contains information such as order number, user name, order date/time, ordered item, delivery quantity, delivery time, price, and seller 3 information (name, address, telephone number, and facsimile number).

25 If the status of the order receipt information indicates order cancellation, the main server 81 generates e-mail confirming the order cancellation and sends it to

the user 4 and seller 3. This e-mail contains information such as order cancellation reason, order number, user name, order date/time, ordered item, delivery quantity, delivery time, price, and seller 3 information (name, address, telephone number, and facsimile number).

This ends the ordering sequence for toner cartridges. However, after the user 4 sends the order confirmation in Step S5, the monitor of the user 4's terminal 41 displays a screen such as the one shown in FIG. 8 for selecting among continuing ordering, viewing order details again, and finishing ordering (logout) although this screen is not shown in FIG. 4. When the user 4 presses a [logout] button, the connection between the main server 81 and terminal 41 is cut off.

According to the present invention, if the user has already been registered for the collection service at the time of log-in in Step S1, the main server 81 may supply an ordering screen such as the one shown in FIG. 9 to the terminal 41 in Step S2. Specifically, the lower part of the order screen shown in FIG. 9 contains a display section 105 for expressing appreciation for cooperation in collection and indicating the progress of collection while the lower part of the ordering screen shown in FIG. 6 contains the collection service registration section 104. The user 4 can see the current collection quantity, collection rate, points, etc. from this display section 105. The collection points, which are determined according to

the progress of collection such as the collected quantity or collection rate, will be used to provide price reduction information, goods commensurate with collected points, or other services to the user and will facilitate the
5 collection operation as part of environmental measures.

In this way, the user 4 can easily order toner cartridges compatible with the equipment he/she uses without the need to select the suitable ones from among a great variety of toner cartridges. This sharply reduces
10 the possibility of ordering wrong toner cartridges, and thus saves the labor or the like of returning toner cartridges ordered by mistake. Furthermore, since the ordering screen displays prices relevant to the given user 4, user 4 can quickly see the cost needed to buy toner
15 cartridges.

On the part of the seller 3, since prices can be presented specifically to user 4, it is possible to facilitate the sale via the Internet 100, enhancing the efficiency of operations. Furthermore, the seller 3 can
20 save the labor of handling returned products due to wrong orders.

[Main-server processing]

Typical processing performed by the main server 81 will be described next.

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- Order processing